

Seminary Formation and Homosexuality

Changing Sexual Morality and the Church's Response

Fr. Earl K. Fernandes, S.T.D.

Fr. Fernandes is Assistant Professor of Moral Theology and Dean at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary of the West, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Abstract

The article examines recent comments by Pope Benedict XVI in Light of the World regarding the recent Vatican instruction Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with Regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in View of Their Admission to the Seminary and to Holy Orders, which deals with homosexuality and the priesthood. This article demonstrates that Pope Benedict XVI's comments are consistent with the "fractures" in the understanding of sexual morality which he identified in The Ratzinger Report. As sexual mores have changed, attempting to "normalize" homosexuality, gradually the Church has developed norms and guidelines for seminary formators, culminating in the instruction.

When *Light of the World* was released, the popular media focused on the pope's comments regarding the use of the condom and HIV prevention.¹ Neglected were his words on the priesthood and homosexuality. Pope Benedict's recent and highly publicized comments in *Light of the World* regarding sexuality and homosexuality and the priesthood, a theme taken up in this issue by Father Brian Mullady, O.P.,² provide the occasion for revisiting the 2005 instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with Regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in View of Their Admission to the Seminary and to*

The Linacre Quarterly 78(3) (August 2011): 306–329.

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0024-3639/2011/7803-0005 \$.30/page.

Holy Orders issued by the Congregation for Catholic Education.³ This instruction set forth criteria for discernment of the vocation to the priesthood and thus admission/non-admission to the seminary for those with homosexual tendencies. While the instruction received much attention upon its release, there has been little reference to it since that time. This article has a twofold purpose: to revisit then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's perspective on recent trends in the understanding of human sexuality in contemporary culture in *The Ratzinger Report* so that his comments in *Light of the World* might be better and more fully understood⁴; and to then examine how the Church through her norms and guidelines regarding seminary formation has attempted to deal with candidates formed in this culture. I will conclude by suggesting that this twofold examination yields a key, given by Pope Benedict, to interpret the criteria set forth in *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*.

The Ratzinger Report and Light of the World ***Provocative Observations on the*** ***Devolution of Sexuality***

The changes wrought by the scientific, feminist, and sexual revolutions had a profound impact upon the understanding of sexuality. While each revolution had some positive elements, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, in his 1985 interview with Vittorio Messori, described the changes in the understanding of sexuality as a series of three successive fractures.

The first identifiable fracture in the understanding of sexuality is the rupture of the bond between sexuality and motherhood. Ratzinger said at that time:

In the culture of the developed world, it is above all the indissoluble bond between sexuality and motherhood that has been ruptured. Separated from motherhood, sex has remained without a locus and has lost its point of reference: it is a kind of drifting mine, a problem and at the same time an omnipresent power.⁵

In the past, sexual activity outside the boundaries of marriage was seen as something shameful or sinful. Even within marriage, prior to the Lambeth Conference of 1930, contraceptive intercourse was rejected almost universally by Christianity—Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant. With the development of the birth control pill and its subsequent approval in 1960 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the risk of an unwanted pregnancy was eliminated; and such behavior could be hidden. Now there was no perceptible shame in sexual activities outside marriage. In fact, the situation was reversed. There existed a means, which were scientifically and medically regulated and promoted, to limit births; this was labeled “responsible behavior” at that time by those who were concerned about overpopulation.

The invention and mass marketing of the birth control pill had several lasting implications for women and their sexual relationships. First, when negotiating about pregnancy, the woman was no longer directly subject to the man. The woman could take oral contraceptives without the consent of the man.⁶ Second, women no longer had to live in fear of unwanted pregnancies. Women were free to pursue their education or their career. Freed from the anxiety of unwanted pregnancy, women could enjoy sex for reasons of pleasure, having been freed from the psychological and emotional pressure of having another child. It was argued that this would allow them to enter more deeply into the dynamics of the sexual relationship. The invention of the pill eroded in the popular mind the connection between procreation and human sexuality. Margaret Sanger expressed this sentiment:

What effect will the practice of birth control have on a woman's moral development? . . . It will break her bonds. It will free her to understand the cravings and soul needs of herself and other women. It will enable her to develop her love nature separate from, and independent of, her maternal nature.⁷

After this first rupture between sexuality and motherhood, Ratzinger identified a second rupture between sexuality and procreation, which came about through the development of artificial reproductive technologies, including in vitro fertilization. Ratzinger comments:

The movement, however, ended up going in the opposite direction: procreation without sexuality. Out of this follow increasingly shocking medical-technical experiments so prevalent in our day where, precisely, procreation is independent of sexuality. Biological manipulation is striving to uncouple man from nature. There is an attempt to transform man, to manipulate him as one does every other 'thing': he is nothing but a product planned according to one's pleasure.⁸

Certain consequences follow logically from these ruptures. The pleasure of the individual becomes the only possible point of reference of sex.⁹ Different forms of satisfying the need for pleasure become individual rights, without distinguishing deviant forms from authentic forms of satisfaction.

A third and final fracture results in the uprooting of man from his very nature whereby sex is severed from any reference to objective reason. Ratzinger draws the conclusion:

No longer having an objective reason to justify it, sex seeks the subjective reason in the gratification of desire, in the most "satisfying" answer for the individual, to the instincts no longer subject to rational restraints. Everyone is free to give to his personal libido the content considered suitable for himself. Hence, it naturally follows that all forms of sexual gratification are transformed into "rights" of the individual. Thus, to cite an especially current example, homosexuality becomes an inalienable right. (Given the aforementioned

premises, how can one deny it?) On the contrary, its full recognition appears to be an aspect of human liberation.¹⁰

Recent developments in the same-sex marriage debate illustrate how certain courts, in approving same-sex marriage, have eliminated the reference to “male” and “female” in their definitions of marriage, replacing it with the term “person,” conceived as an androgynous individual, thereby denying sexual differentiation as an essential or even important part of personhood and falling into a dualism in which the body becomes accidental to the person. Just as many claim a “right” to same-sex marriage, some homosexual men will claim a right to ordination, arguing that sexual orientation and sexual differentiation are irrelevant to priestly service. Such a position formed by these three fissures in the culture, however, stands in contrast to the very nature of the priesthood where because of his “configuration to Christ, the *entire life* of the sacred minister must be animated by the gift of his *whole* person to the Church and by an authentic pastoral charity.”¹¹

However provocative one finds Ratzinger’s thesis, David Crawford has shown¹² how it is supported by the work of radical historians such as Michel Foucault¹³ and Jonathan Ned Katz.¹⁴ Foucault believes that if pleasure is the issue, then gender distinctions and language about sexual orientation simply perpetuate structures of power and oppression, masking the reality of the unjust situation. Katz argues that sexual normativity in Puritan America, for example, depended on its procreative character while perversity was related to non-procreative sexual acts.¹⁵

It was in the nineteenth century that a procreation-dominated sexual ethic began to shift toward a pleasure-based ethic. As a result of this shift, Katz contends that terms such as “heterosexual” and “homosexual” were invented to describe two types of pleasure; the former was considered normative and the latter perverse. Heterosexuality, in his view, is a relative term used to preserve structures of power of male-female couples over same-sex couples. Katz sees heterosexual behavior, as it becomes more artificial and less oriented to procreation, and homosexual behavior converging into the same behavior pattern rooted in pleasure. He argues that, once procreation has been removed from heterosexual behavior, the sexual practices in heterosexual and homosexual ways of life, are no longer essentially different. In other words, as heterosexual sex becomes homosexualized, sexual orientation becomes irrelevant. Thus he writes:

The commercial stimulation of eroticism lifts the veil off the old sex mysteries. The marketing of pleasure-sex to all comers with cash helps to demolish old rationales for heterosexual supremacy—even old rationales for the hetero-homo difference. For, as pleasure pursuits, heterosexuality and homosexuality have little to distinguish them. Heterosexuals are more and more like homosexuals, except for the sex of their partners.¹⁶

While Foucault and Katz may be disagreed with in some of their anthropological presuppositions or contested in their historical conclusions, they are in agreement with the assessment of Ratzinger with respect to the modern meaning of sexuality as being largely pleasure driven. While pleasure may not be the only reason for pursuing sexual intercourse, it becomes the principal reason for intercourse once sexuality is severed from maternity and paternity and from procreation and reproduction.

There are many reasons for this shift toward a pleasure-oriented understanding of sexuality. These include social, political, and economic factors (such as the sexual and industrial revolutions), as well as, advances in science and technology (such as greater knowledge of the fertility cycle, sophisticated means of contraception, and the development of reproductive technologies). Livio Melina identifies three significant cultural roots to this mentality that conceives sex as principally for pleasure.¹⁷ First, there is a crude, naturalistic model of sexuality found in psychoanalysis, largely attributable to Freud, which interprets sexuality as an irresistible impulse that has to be satisfied to avoid creating a personality imbalance.¹⁸ Sexual instinct is understood simply as a need to be satisfied. The only criterion for correct behavior is the individual experience of well-being, seen in psychological balance.

A second cultural root of this conception of sexuality as merely pleasure can be found in an anthropology of the autonomous individual, typical of Enlightenment rationalism, in which man affirms himself as free in the measure in which he emancipates himself from tradition and nature. In this understanding, the body is seen as something to be used. It is seen as an instrument extrinsic to the acting subject rather than an integral part of the identity of the acting subject. Characteristics such as sexual differentiation, maleness or femaleness, are thought of as secondary or merely accessories. The body comes to be conceived as private property, a "thing," to be disposed of according to the free choice of the individual. These two cultural roots seem contradictory, and the way to reconcile them will be to place sexual relations and marriage in a Kantian contractual model, in which the right to the use of the body (as a thing) is exchanged between the spouses.¹⁹

According to Melina, the third factor that contributes to this conception and practice of sex as pleasure is the universal exaltation of feelings or sentiment as the ultimate criterion for "love." Love is seen as an absolutely uncontrollable experience that simply cannot be confined to the institutional structure of marriage, but which, on the contrary, has its own criterion of value: the intensity of affective experience. Isolated from the totality of personal life, however, this affective experience has a tendency to slip into pure emotionalism.²⁰ Given that feelings change, this conception of love becomes problematic when one speaks of a definitive and stable union, which involves an assumption of personal responsibility, because if the emotional sentiment cannot be sustained the union will dissipate.²¹

The analysis of Melina confirms the final fracture of which Ratzinger spoke: the depersonalization of sex and the denial of man in his very nature. Sex conceived of and practiced merely as a source of pleasure reduces man to a creature dominated by impulse, to a radical individual who conceives his body as an extrinsic thing to be handed over, and as incapable of lasting personal communion. Fundamentally, this understanding of sexuality leads to the denial of two foundational principles of Pope John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*: that persons are to be treated as persons not mere objects of pleasure and that there is a nuptial meaning of the body, recognized in the sexual complementarity of man and woman, which allows the person to recognize that he or she is made for the other.

We should not be surprised, therefore, that the uncoupling of human sexuality from procreation has led many to use sexuality as a means to dominate others and has produced an environment in which sexual abuse could occur. This is true in marriage, when contracepting couples use each other's bodies as instruments for pleasure. It is true in same-sex relationships, when one partner seeks to assert himself or herself over the other. It is true, as the recent John Jay Report implies, in cases of sexual abuse, when an affectively immature person—here we are dealing largely with adult men and post-pubescent boys—has power and access to those who are weaker and vulnerable. The idea of fruitful and truly human self-giving, of personal communion, is lost entirely.

By examining Ratzinger's thoughts in *The Ratzinger Report* one is in a better position to understand more fully why, nearly twenty-five years later, Pope Benedict states in *Light of the World*:

Sexuality has an intrinsic meaning and direction, which is not homosexual. The meaning and direction of sexuality is to bring about the union of man and woman and in this way give humanity posterity. This is the determination internal to the essence of sexuality. Everything else is against sexuality's intrinsic meaning and direction. . . .

The issue at stake here is the intrinsic truth of sexuality's significance in the constitution of man's being. If someone has deep-seated homosexual inclinations . . . if, in any case, they have power over him, this is a great trial for him, just as other trials conflict other people as well. But this does not mean that homosexuality thereby becomes morally right. Rather, it remains contrary to the essence of what God originally willed.²²

The Development of the Church's Norms and Guidelines regarding Homosexuality and the Priesthood

As we have seen, Katz argued that the shift in the modern mentality to a pleasure-oriented understanding of sexuality has blurred the difference between homosexual and heterosexual. Many who have adopted the above-mentioned view of sexuality find it difficult to see why a

homosexual man could not serve as a priest. A good number would not acknowledge homosexual acts as morally wrong or as intrinsically evil acts; still fewer would acknowledge that even the inclination, while not sinful, is disordered.

In this historical context, the following statement of Pope Benedict could not be other than provocative:

Homosexuality is incompatible with the priestly vocation. Otherwise, celibacy itself would lose its meaning as a renunciation. It would be extremely dangerous if celibacy became a sort of pretext for bringing people into the priesthood who don't want to get married anyway. For in the end, their attitude toward man or woman is somehow distorted, off-center, and, in any case, is not within the direction of creation of which we have spoken.²³

It is not that the Church has been unaware of the trends in thinking about human sexuality and homosexuality in particular. In fact, recognizing the changing *mores* and the difficulties homosexuality and sins against chastity posed to the seminary community, to the Church, and to the candidate and priest himself, the Church developed norms and guidelines—criteria for discernment—throughout the twentieth century, culminating in the 2005 instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*. This section will attempt to trace broadly the historical development of those norms to show the continuity of Pope Benedict's statement about the incompatibility of priesthood with homosexuality with the Church's thinking on these matters.

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, there were, in the twentieth century, three magisterial interventions regarding priestly celibacy: *Haerent animo* (1908); *Ad catholici sacerdotii* (1935); and *Menti nostrae* (1950).²⁴ Two circular letters were also issued in 1943 and 1955 respectively by the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and University Studies²⁵; these suggested, in continuity with the encyclical letter of Pope Pius XI, that if there remained some reasonably founded doubt about a candidate's suitability for the charism of celibacy, one had to opt for a negative decision with respect to Orders, in the interest of the Church and the candidate himself. This position continues to be expressed in canon law in canon 1052§1, which demands that the bishop must be certain of the suitability of the candidate based on positive arguments.²⁶

Besides reiterating the directive that in cases of doubt the decision had to be made in favor of the Church, the 1955 circular letter also excluded candidates who had committed a grave sin against chastity during the year preceding entrance into theological studies (remembering that at this time, many candidates entered minor seminary before studying philosophy and theology). Furthermore, a grave sin committed with others after entrance into the seminary was to lead to immediate dismissal from the seminary and the route to the priesthood, regardless of the year of studies.

In 1961, the Sacred Congregation for Religious issued the instruction *On the Careful Selection and Training of Candidates for the States of Perfection and Sacred Orders*.²⁷ This instruction prohibited the administration of Holy Orders to those who consider themselves homosexual. Specifically it states: “Advancement to religious vows and ordination should be barred to those who are afflicted with evil tendencies to homosexuality or pederasty, since for them the common life and the priestly ministry would constitute serious dangers.”²⁸ Additionally, “If a student in a minor seminary has sinned gravely against the sixth commandment with a person of the same or the other sex, or has been the occasion of grave scandal in the matter of chastity, he is to be dismissed immediately as stipulated in canon 1371.”²⁹

Space does not permit a thorough discussion of the documents of the Second Vatican Council and its treatment of celibacy; however, it is useful to cite *Presbyterorum ordinis*, number 16, in support of the charism of celibacy:

This holy synod again approves and confirms, fully trusting this gift of the Spirit (celibacy) so fitting for the priesthood of the New Testament, freely given by the Father, provided that those who participate in the priesthood of Christ through the sacrament of Orders—and also the whole Church—humbly and fervently pray for it.³⁰

Celibacy as a gift and offering is seen as integral to the idea of pastoral charity, which animates and guides the spiritual life of the priest. The Second Vatican Council also desired careful screening of candidates for Holy Orders. The following passage from *Optatum totius* is instructive:

With watchful concern for the age of each and for his stage of progress, an inquiry should be made into the candidate’s proper intention and freedom of choice, into his spiritual, moral, and intellectual qualifications, into his appropriate physical and psychic health—taking into consideration also possible hereditary deficiencies. Also to be considered is the ability of the candidate to bear the priestly burdens and exercise the pastoral offices.

In the entire process of selecting and testing students, however, a due firmness is to be adopted, even if a deplorable lack of priests should exist, since God will not allow His Church to want for ministers if those who are worthy are promoted and those not qualified are, at an early date, guided in a fatherly way to undertake other tasks. The latter should also be given sufficient direction so that, conscious of their vocation as Christians, they might eagerly embrace the lay apostolate.³¹

Three critical ideas emerge from this brief passage. First, the Church understands that not all those desirous of the priesthood are suitable. Second, the Church (as previously seen in the 1961 instruction, is concerned that life in the seminary and priestly life are not overburdening for the individual. Third, that, while not all are suitable

for the priesthood, a person can still discover, through proper spiritual direction, how he may best serve the Lord and the Church in the world; this resonates with another theme of the council—the universal call to holiness.

Two years after the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI addressed the issue of celibacy in his encyclical letter *Sacerdotalis caelibatus*.³² After describing the charism of celibacy as a gratuitous gift of God, Pope Paul VI highlights the natural dispositions that are the condition so that the gift may be received and cultivated by the person who aspires for the priesthood. After all, *gratia not destruit sed perficit naturam*. He writes: “Concretely, this divine calling manifests itself in a given individual with his own definite personality structure which is not at all overpowered by grace.”³³ He continues:

It is likewise necessary that exact account be taken of the physical and psychological state of the candidate in order to guide and orient him toward the priestly ideal; so a truly adequate formation should harmoniously coordinate grace and nature in the man in whom one clearly sees the proper conditions and qualifications.³⁴

The theological presupposition is that God would not call someone to an ideal without giving him the necessary talents and grace to live up to that ideal. This leads Paul VI to an even stronger statement:

Those who are discovered to be unfit for physical, psychological, or moral reasons should be quickly removed from the path to the priesthood. Let educators appreciate that this is one of their very grave duties. They must neither indulge in false hopes and dangerous illusions nor permit the candidate to nourish these hopes in any way, with resultant damage to himself or to the Church. The life of the celibate priest, which engages the whole man so totally and so delicately, excludes in fact those of insufficient physical, psychic, and moral qualifications. Nor should anyone pretend that grace supplies for the defects of nature in such a man.³⁵

In 1974, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education issued *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy*.³⁶ These guidelines had been called for in *Sacerdotalis caelibatus* (n. 61). It should be noted that these were *guidelines*, which were understood as advice or counsel, and not strictly binding or precise norms, which might have been more helpful given the rapidly changing society mindset and sexual mores. The document insisted upon a candidate’s maturity at three distinct levels: the human, Christian, and priestly. Here, one begins to see the roots of the concept of “affective maturity” that appears in *Pastores dabо vobis*. Several articles, namely numbers 5, 9, 21, and 47, are of particular importance to our subject.

The introduction (n. 5) to the guidelines is most direct:

These guidelines are written with the training of normal men in mind, since candidates for the priesthood ought to be normal. In

cases of more or less abnormal persons, a more specialized kind of work has to be undertaken, but, of course, that kind of student must clearly be told that priestly life is not for him.³⁷

Furthermore, the issue of celibacy is a reality that transcends the natural order (n. 9). It is not merely a giving up of marriage but a real sacrifice. Thus, a candidate should be examined as to the capacity for and meaningfulness of the sacrifice:

Celibacy transcends the natural order. It involves a total personal commitment. It cannot be maintained except with God's grace. More than a mere law of the Church, celibacy must be understood as a "qualification" which receives added value because it is publicly offered in the presence of the whole Church.

Celibacy is an offering, an oblation, a real and true sacrifice, not merely giving up of the sacrament of Marriage, for the sake of the Kingdom.³⁸

In treating human maturity, the document (n. 21) addresses also the development of a man's sexual maturity. Homosexuality is described as a sign of immaturity, and the guidelines suggest that a man must arrive at heterosexuality in order to develop the truly human matrix necessary for the development of pastoral charity:

In order to talk about a person as mature, his sexual instinct must have overcome two immature tendencies, narcissism and homosexuality, and must have arrived at heterosexuality. This is the first step in sexual development, but a second step is also necessary, namely "love" must be seen as gift and not a form of selfishness.

The consequence of this development is sexual conduct on a level that can be properly called "human," whereby a person gains self-knowledge with self-esteem and acquires a new concept of himself.³⁹

Moreover, the priestly vocation and celibacy cannot be seen as a flight from the world, rather it involves the sacrifice of three natural tendencies (n. 47), some of which the person with "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies does not possess:

Priestly celibacy is not simply to be identified with remaining unmarried or with sexual continence. It is a renunciation of three natural tendencies: genital function, conjugal love, and natural fatherhood, made "for the love of the kingdom of heaven." To be a genuine and sincere witness to religious values, it can never be a negation of, or a flight from, sex, but rather it must be a sublimation of sexuality.⁴⁰

In other words, genital function, conjugal love, and natural fatherhood must be a true sacrifice for the priesthood for the man to be considered suitable. For these things to be considered sacrificial, the candidate must already be attracted to them, not merely intellectually, but affectively. He must be oriented to them and desire them.

More interesting is an earlier memorandum from the Congregation for Catholic Education to the bishops of the United States, dated July 9, 1985, which was cited in a 1995 speech given by then-secretary of the same congregation, Msgr. José Saraiva Martins, in a gathering with the rectors of the seminaries of Sicily:

They must not be accepted, therefore, they must be clearly excluded from the walk toward the priesthood: 1) a candidate who is heterosexually active; 2) a candidate who tends toward an excessive familiarity with women, even if in a chaste way; 3) a candidate who is actively homosexual or who leads a homosexual lifestyle (whether he is homosexual or not).⁴¹

In his judgment, candidates who committed grave sins against chastity were not suitable (*idoneus*) for the priesthood, whether homosexual or heterosexual. Moreover, comporting oneself in an excessively familiar way with others or leading a homosexual lifestyle, even without the completion of homosexual acts, was seen as a disqualifying characteristic. There is evidence here that support for or affinity toward what the instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations* will call the “gay culture” was already viewed as disqualifying candidates from Orders.

More recently, the Holy See expressly addressed similar sentiments in the 1990 *Potissimum institutioni*, Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes.⁴² Specifically, number 39 reflects upon the role of sexuality in the divine plan of creation and salvation and concludes:

Those who do not seem to be able to overcome their homosexual tendencies, or, who maintain that it is possible to adopt a third way of living in an ambiguous state between celibacy and marriage are to be dismissed from the religious life.⁴³

The 1992 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* instructs the faithful that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered; that is, they are intrinsically evil acts (n. 2357). It distinguishes these acts from “deep-seated homosexual tendencies” (n. 2358); these inclinations, while not sinful, are also objectively disordered.⁴⁴

A more precise vision of homosexuality is given in the *On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons* (n. 7):

To choose someone of the same sex for one’s sexual activity is to annul the rich symbolism and meaning, not to mention the goals, of the Creator’s sexual design. Homosexual activity is not a complementary union, able to transmit life; and so it thwarts the call to a life of that form of self-giving which the Gospel says is the essence of Christian living.⁴⁵

Momentarily passing over *Pastores dabo vobis*, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments gave direction to the bishops on the suitability of homosexual candidates for Holy Orders. In 2002, Cardinal Jorge Medina Estévez, who at the time was

prefect of that congregation, responding to a question from a bishop regarding the ordination of men with homosexual inclinations, and basing his answer, in part, upon the requests for dispensations from the obligations of Holy Orders, writes:

The ordination to the diaconate and priesthood of homosexual men or men with homosexual tendencies is absolutely inadvisable and imprudent, and from the pastoral point of view, very risky. A homosexual person or a person with homosexual tendencies is not, *idoneus* to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders.⁴⁶

Finally, in 2005, the Congregation for Catholic Education issued its instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, which excluded as candidates for the seminary and priesthood those who practiced homosexuality, presented deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or supported the gay culture. The document, rather than being a reactive text, was the fruit of years of study and reflection.

Homosexuality and Priesthood: The Instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*

Thus our brief historical survey brings us back to Pope Benedict's reference to *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations* in his interview in *Light of the World*:

The Congregation for Education issued a decision a few years ago to the effect that homosexual candidates cannot become priests because their sexual orientation estranges them from the proper sense of paternity, from the intrinsic nature of priestly being. The selection of candidates to the priesthood must therefore be very careful. The greatest attention is needed here in order to prevent the intrusion of this kind of ambiguity and to head off a situation where celibacy of priests would practically end up being identified with the tendency to homosexuality.⁴⁷

Pope Benedict highlights the sacrificial nature of celibacy, the importance of "fatherhood," the natural heterosexuality of the candidate, and as we have seen earlier, the order of creation itself. It should also be noted that as the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, he would have had significant influence on many of the more recent documents and would have had the opportunity to scrutinize them theologically. Theologians and clinicians, as shown below, support his position favoring stronger vetting of candidates to the priesthood.

Given the culture and the shift toward a pleasure-oriented understanding of sexuality, the requisite maturity and healthy sexual education cannot be presumed. Stephen J. Rossetti points out:

While modern candidates to the priesthood may appear more savvy than previous generations about human sexuality, their knowledge is usually limited to merely physical dimensions and that, too, is often

distorted and misinformed. Today's candidates for the priesthood should not be presumed to have a mature and authentic understanding of human sexuality, even from a bodily point of view, but especially in its psychological, theological, and spiritual dimensions.⁴⁸

Rossetti highlights the strong connection between affective and sexual maturity, emphasizing that un-integrated sexuality, whether it is repressed or obsessed, manifests itself in dysfunctional behaviors, ranging from depression and anxiety disorders, to rage, to struggles for power, and finally to compulsive behaviors. Rossetti admits that assessing sexual maturity and integration is challenging and suggests that the two best assessment tools are the psycho-sexual history interview of candidates for admission to the seminary and the observation of those responsible for the formation of candidates. Rossetti provides three questions that seminary admissions committees and formators may find useful: 1) Does the candidate know who he is sexually? 2) Does he live in peace with his sexuality? and 3) Can he express his sexuality in a life-giving chaste manner?⁴⁹ For Rossetti, sexual awareness is not enough; chastity, which demands self-discipline, in all relationships is required. It is insufficient for a candidate to simply refrain from acting out sexually; he may not engage in "campy" behavior or speech, nor may he support the so-called "gay culture."

Bartholomew Kiely, S.J., concurs with Rossetti; refraining from sexual behavior is not enough. Awareness of the disciplinary questions and typical correlates of male homosexuality are essential for assessing a person's capacity for chaste celibacy. Kiely identifies six correlates of male homosexuality which may justify excluding candidates with deep-seated homosexual tendencies who lack the requisite affective, human, and sexual maturity: the need to justify or make known one's homosexuality (promote the "normalization" of homosexual behavior); a preoccupation with sex and reported difficulties with chastity; problems with aggression (both personal aggression and that from pressure groups); aggregation of homosexual men with other homosexuals; jealousy and exhibitionism; and finally, seductiveness toward women.⁵⁰

The final part of the preceding quotation from Pope Benedict is noteworthy. Given the continual devolution of sexuality in the culture, the priesthood is seen by some as a refuge for those who would not desire marriage. Bishop Giuseppe Versaldi shares Pope Benedict's alarm, observing an emerging and problematic viewpoint, which could be nothing further from the idea of a priest as a man for others:

Priestly celibacy, demanded as a norm for the Latin Church for those who wish to become ordained priests, has become part of some people's arguments in favor of the admission of homosexual persons to the priesthood, inasmuch as, they say, not being exposed to the risk of marriage, they would be ideal candidates for the celibate priesthood. This paradoxical logic is the fruit of the dominant culture in many countries, which value more the pretexts of the individual than

the truth of the objective meanings (of priesthood, marriage, and sexuality). If, in fact, homosexuals (in the sense understood by the instruction [*Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*], that is, those who “practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called gay culture”) offer a certain guarantee around the danger of heterosexual relations, their particular characteristics push them to maintain a distance from persons of the opposite sex, revealing a weakness that is prejudicial to the exercise of the priesthood. Further, these same particular characteristics would not preserve them from the danger of betraying chastity in their encounters with persons of the same sex, through the always more prevalent gay culture.⁵¹

Recall that the 2005 instruction admits that a clarification on the standards for admittance to priestly formation was made “more urgent by the current situation.” Bishop John D’Arcy, noted that the first John Jay Report, was initiated in response to “the recent crisis,” but he had publicly supported the position articulated in the instruction for over thirty years, indicating that this was an emerging, but certainly not new, problem.⁵² Another interpretation of this language cites the fact that the document’s initial drafting started years before the scandals exploded. Some claim that the instruction first arose out of concern for the increasing social and political prominence of homosexual “rights.”⁵³ Tony Anatrella, writing in *L’Osservatore Romano*, cautioned that the “document, prepared for a long time under the pontificate of John Paul II, should not be interpreted as a reactive text, redacted in a few weeks,” but rather should be seen as “the fruit of a vast investigation and of deep reflection.”⁵⁴ Indeed, the historical survey sketched above supports such a claim.

The document consists of a short introduction, three main parts, and a conclusion. The first part deals with affective maturity. The second part specifically addresses homosexuality and the ordained ministry, specifying who cannot be admitted to the seminary or Holy Orders. The third part addresses vocational discernment by the Church, particularly the bishop, the rector, seminary formators, the spiritual director, and the candidate himself.

Part I of the document addresses affective maturity and spiritual fatherhood. The priest is one, who through the sacrament of Orders, is configured to Jesus Christ, the head, shepherd, and spouse of the Church. He is to radiate the spousal character of Christ’s love.⁵⁵ To do this, however, the minister’s whole life must be animated by “the gift of his whole person to the Church and by an authentic pastoral charity.”⁵⁶

Such a gift is only possible if the subject has reached *affective maturity* since only such a condition will “allow him to relate correctly to both men and women, developing in him a true sense of spiritual fatherhood toward the Church community that will be entrusted to him.”⁵⁷

The point of departure of the instruction is the configuration of the candidate to Jesus Christ, head, shepherd, and spouse of the Church.

The virtue that expresses this full configuration to Christ is *pastoral charity*, which demands affective maturity. Pastoral charity was described at the Second Vatican Council (*Presbyterorum ordinis*, n. 14) but received a fuller treatment in Pope John Paul II's apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabо vobis* (n. 23):

The internal principle, the force which animates and guides the spiritual life of the priest inasmuch as he is configured to Christ the head and shepherd, is pastoral charity, as a participation in Jesus Christ's own pastoral charity, a gift freely bestowed by the Holy Spirit and likewise a task and a call which demand a free and committed response on the part of the priest.

The essential content of this pastoral charity is the gift of self, the total gift of self to the Church, following the example of Christ. "Pastoral charity is the virtue by which we imitate Christ in his self-giving and service. It is not just what we do, but our gift of self, which manifests Christ's love for his flock. Pastoral charity determines our way of thinking and acting, our way of relating to people. It makes special demands on us."⁵⁸

The instruction demands that every priest develop this pastoral charity in imitation of Christ and demonstrate this charity in the gift of self to the People of God. If the virtue of pastoral charity is the substance and the synthesis of the spiritual condition of the priest, affective maturity is the human (or psychic) condition for allowing him "to relate correctly to both men and women, developing in him a true sense of spiritual fatherhood towards the Church community that will be entrusted to him."⁵⁹

In *Pastores dabо vobis* (n. 43), when speaking of the dimensions of priestly formation, Pope John Paul II places a priority on *human formation* without which "the whole priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation." It is within this human formation, that affective maturity of the candidate for the priesthood must be placed for the acquisition of true freedom. He writes:

The priest, who is called to be a "living image" of Jesus Christ, head and shepherd of the Church, should seek to reflect in himself, as far as possible, the human perfection which shines forth in the incarnate Son of God and which is reflected with particular liveliness in his attitudes toward others as we see narrated in the Gospels.⁶⁰

A central characteristic of the priestly ministry is being able to relate to others. This demands molding one's personality, in the words of *Pastores dabо vobis*, so as to become a "bridge and not an obstacle" for others in their encounter with Jesus Christ. The human quality is necessary for the priest to imitate Christ who "knew that which was in every man." Gradually, the priest becomes "able to know the depths of the human heart, to perceive difficulties and problems, to make meeting and dialogue easy, to create trust and cooperation, to express serene and objective judgments" (n. 43).

This human maturation, within which affective maturity—the prerequisite for authentic pastoral charity—flourishes presupposes the centrality of love in human existence. In his encyclical letter *Redemptoris hominis*, Pope John Paul II writes:

Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it.⁶¹

To this affective maturation, there must also be added education in sexuality, which helps one to understand and to live the “spousal meaning” of the human body in which love is an expression of the whole person in all his physical, psychic, and spiritual dimensions.⁶² John Paul II continues:

Education for responsible love and the affective maturity of the person are totally necessary for those who, like the priest, are called to celibacy, that is, to offer with the grace of the Spirit and the free response of one’s own will the whole of one’s love and care to Jesus Christ and to his Church. In view of the commitment to celibacy, affective maturity should bring to human relationships of serene friendship and deep brotherliness a strong, lively, and personal love for Jesus Christ. As the synod fathers have written, “A love for Christ, which overflows into a dedication to everyone, is of the greatest importance in developing affective maturity. Thus the candidate, who is called to celibacy, will find in affective maturity a firm support to live chastity in faithfulness and joy.”⁶³

After this education and formation, a judgment must be made about a person’s capacity for the priestly state of life. Pastorally, priests make a similar judgment when preparing couples for marriage. Priests assess whether the couple, who has a natural right to marry, is capable of assuming the responsibilities and duties of marriage. Do they possess the necessary affective and human maturity to have a successful marriage, assisted by God’s grace? In reality, it is only within the relationship of a full and total love that sexuality acquires its authentic meaning and reveals its function of self-giving in the reciprocity of the relationship between man and woman. This demands a general psychic maturity, which leads the person to control some sexual instincts and impulses that could by themselves lead to the failure of a loving relationship.⁶⁴

All too often marriages fail due to weaknesses in human and affective maturity. At least in the United States, canon 1095 (grave lack of due discretion) in the *Code of Canon Law* is commonly utilized to declare a marriage null. Such maturity is demanded, not only of those called to marriage, but also of those called to the priesthood. One who cannot give himself to another in authentic love is not suitable for either marriage or priesthood. Human maturity represents the self-realization of man and is the point of arrival in his process of development. Within this maturity is inscribed also affective maturity, which, in its turn, includes

sexual maturity. The integration of these components makes the person able to give himself and to place himself in relationships with others with an attitude of benevolence and of the love necessary for living a good life in common. One understands that such maturity is required for the priesthood as a necessary condition so that the person may bring to maturity other aspects of the ministry to which the candidate is called.⁶⁵

With these cautions about homosexuality in mind and understanding that affective maturity and pastoral charity are demanded of every priest, part II of the instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations* gives the disciplinary provisions regarding homosexuality and the ordained ministry, listing who may not be admitted to the seminary and Holy Orders and explaining why this is the case.

The instruction is clear that the Church, which shows profound respect for homosexual persons “cannot admit to the seminary or to Holy Orders those who practice homosexuality, present deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or support the so-called ‘gay culture.’”⁶⁶ The instruction then gives the explanation as to why this norm exists: “Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women.”⁶⁷

Taking into account the first two articles of the instruction, one might say that a theological reason why men with deep-seated homosexual tendencies cannot be ordained to the priesthood is that the sacramental economy is inscribed in human psychology. Christ is the Spouse of the Church, His Bride. This is symbolized by the priest who is of the male sex like Christ and who, in sacramental actions, acts in the person of Christ the Head of the Body, especially in the Eucharist.⁶⁸ The instruction implies that whoever has profoundly rooted homosexual tendencies is not able to symbolically represent in an adequate way Christ the Spouse of the Church; cannot develop a true sense of spiritual paternity; and, cannot reach the required maturity to adequately carry out priestly ministry.

The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education’s 1974 document *Orientamenti* had said that homosexuality was a sign of immaturity. The affectively immature person rather than give himself to another tends to turn inward. In the case of the homosexual man, he does not orient his life toward another who is different from himself (the woman) as a heterosexual man does; rather he orients himself toward one who is like himself (another man) for which the choice of a vocation to the priesthood would be a freedom from something (namely, woman) or an escape of sorts.⁶⁹ The priesthood, on the other hand, can never be a flight from something. It demands a free act of self-giving. If one lacks the capacity to offer one’s whole person to another, one is suitable neither for marriage nor for Orders.

When the instruction says that “Such persons, in fact, find themselves in a situation that gravely hinders them from relating correctly to men and women,” it seems to suggest that the demands of pastoral

charity required of the priest are not compatible with the condition of the man who, as a homosexual, seeks self-affirmation rather than to give himself to another. Such a person would have difficulty controlling his own affectivity and sexuality in his relationships with men and women. Men would represent an object of his desire for gratification (presenting a risk beginning with entrance in the seminary). Women would be seen as persons possibly providing security that is lacking in the homosexual person.⁷⁰

In both cases, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the subject to find fulfillment in the Catholic priesthood, which fulfillment comes from that freedom of being a person who is “truly master of oneself, determined to fight and overcome the different forms of selfishness and individualism which threaten the life of each one, ready to open out to others, generous in dedication and service to one’s neighbor.”⁷¹

Without going into much detail, the instruction distinguishes between those with “deep-seated” homosexual tendencies and those whose tendencies are of a transitory nature by distinguishing between “structural” and “non-structural” tendencies. The latter case might be someone who is in minor seminary (adolescence) who has not yet overcome such tendencies or whose personality structure is not yet firm. Likewise, some individuals may engage in same-sex activity for a period of time due to alcoholism, drug use, through coercion, in situations of poverty, or even in prison. When these problems are addressed, these tendencies subside and ultimately appear to have been transitory. There may be many reasons that such candidates are not suitable for orders, but these will be different from the reasons that those with deep-seated homosexual tendencies are not suitable. Nevertheless, such tendencies must be overcome at least three years prior to diaconate ordination. Implicitly, the document suggests that candidates with transitory tendencies could be admitted to the seminary, but the document does not speak of the prudence or advisability of admitting such a candidate.

Part III of the instruction reminds the reader that the call to priesthood is not discerned solely within the individual, but rather the Church herself plays a determinative role in the discernment. She ultimately determines the suitability of candidates. Immediately, the document recalls that a vocation is a gift from God through the Church, in the Church, and for the Church. No one has a right to be a priest, and desire alone is insufficient.⁷² The push of secular society for a “normalization” of homosexual activity, accompanied by equal-rights claims under the guise of human liberation, already noted in *The Ratzinger Report* (see above), gives the Church cause for concern.

Despite this pressure, the Church has the duty to verify that the candidate has reached affective maturity. Principally, this task falls to the bishop or the major superior who, before conferring ordination, must arrive at moral certitude regarding the candidate’s suitability for Orders. In case of serious or well-founded doubt, he must not admit

the candidate to Orders.⁷³ The rector, as the principal agent of the bishop or major superior in determining suitability for Orders, and other seminary formators play a critical role in the discernment of a vocation, with the rector expressing his own judgment about the suitability of the candidate.

While the rector plays a role in the external forum, this responsibility also falls to the spiritual director in the internal forum. The spiritual director, also an agent on behalf of the Church, is entrusted with the task of pointing out the demands of priestly chastity and affective maturity to the candidate and of helping the candidate to discern whether he possesses the requisite qualities. Spiritual directors and confessors have a moral obligation to dissuade candidates with deep-seated homosexual tendencies from continuing to press toward ordination. This obligation arises certainly from the Church yet also out of pastoral solicitude for the candidate.

Finally, the individual candidate is responsible for his own formation. He must recall that a vocation is a gift through the Church, in the Church, and for the Church; therefore, there must be a level of trust and transparency with seminary formators and his spiritual director. Honesty with oneself and with one's superiors is necessary for anyone desirous of ministerial priesthood.

Despite the consistent and clear teaching of the Church and the norms provided by the instruction (and its predecessors), candidates with such tendencies are sometimes ordained to the priesthood. This could be due to a lack of vigilance on the part of seminary formators; due to a lack of sound spiritual direction; due to dishonesty on the part of the candidate; due to a lack of adherence to the Church's mind on this matter; or due to a lack of awareness. It could be the candidate has continued to ordination in sincerity and with good will and only later, after struggles, really discovers his inclinations. What is to be done then? One makes the best of the situation through the difficult yet joyful work of chaste living by actively addressing deficiencies in affective maturity through prayer, spiritual direction, therapy, and healthy relationships.

Pope Benedict acknowledges this phenomenon in his concluding remarks on the subject in *Light of the World*:

Well, that is just one of the miseries of the Church. And the persons who are affected must at least try not to express this inclination actively, in order to remain true to the intrinsic meaning of the priesthood.⁷⁴

Conclusion

Pope Benedict's comments in *Light of the World*, as striking as they seem, do not represent a new teaching of the Church but rather are statements perfectly consistent with the Church's doctrine and norms regarding homosexuality and the sacrament of Holy Orders. More than five

years after the release of the instruction *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, one may legitimately ask: are the norms set forth in the instruction being implemented consistently and correctly?

We may not know the answer to that question, but certainly Pope Benedict is aware of the uneven and problematic response to the Church's consistent insight into the many dimensions of human sexuality and its manifestations in the Church and the world. This problematic response resulted from a loose interpretation of previous Church documents and a sheer lack of ecclesiastical discipline, perpetuating the problems and sub-culture that have plagued seminaries since the time of the sexual revolution and correspond to the general devolution of sexuality in society.

Pope Benedict has striven, therefore, to remind Catholics, not only of the Church's discipline, but also of what the Church expects of her priests. They are to be men, configured to Jesus Christ, the head, shepherd, and spouse of the Church, capable of giving themselves completely to their Bride the Church with generous hearts, animated by the true spirit of pastoral charity.

If there was any doubt as to the mind of the Church or the Holy Father on this matter, the remarks in *Light of the World* provide remarkable clarity: homosexuality, its practice or deep-seated tendencies, or support of the homosexual movement, disqualify a candidate from the priesthood. Such a person cannot be judged to have the requisite affective maturity demanded of the priestly vocation and cannot properly assume the role of father and spouse.

It is the particular responsibility of the Holy Father to teach and guide all in the Church in an effort to bring about a deeper understanding of the mysteries of human life. As the priesthood struggles in the modern world to become the kenotic sign of Christ's love for His Bride the Church, the pope has continued to call for truth, honesty, and wisdom in our life of discipleship and service. It is no small matter to stand *in persona Christi* at the altars of the Church. This discussion indicates a very important way in which the Church has worked to bring interior truth to the external sign of Christ's presence among us.

Notes

¹ Pope Benedict XVI and Peter Seewald, *Light of the World: The Pope, the Church and the Signs of the Times* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010).

² Fr. Brian Mullady, O.P., S.T.D., "Pope Benedict XVI on the Priesthood and Homosexuality," *Linacre Quarterly* 78 (2011): 294–306.

³ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, "Instruction *In Continuity* (Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with Regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in View of Their Admission to the Seminary and to Holy Orders)," *L'Osservatore Romano* (Italian), November 30, 2005, 5.

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger with Vittorio Messori, *Rapporto sulla Fede* (Cinisello Balsamo: Edizioni Paolini, 1984); in English, *The Ratzinger Report*, trans. Salvator Attanasio and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985).

⁵ Ratzinger and Messori, *The Ratzinger Report*, 84.

⁶ Jack Dominian, *Sexual Integrity* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1987), 30.

⁷ Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (1920; Elmsford, NY: Maxwell, 1969), 179–180.

⁸ Ratzinger and Messori, *The Ratzinger Report*, 84.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, citing Pope John Paul II, ost-synodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992), n. 23.

¹² David S. Crawford, “Liberal Androgyny: ‘Gay Marriage’ and the Meaning of Sexuality in Our Time,” *Communio* 33 (2006): 239–265.

¹³ Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, vol. 2, *L’Usage des plaisirs* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1984); English: *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 2, *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 187. Foucault argues that the distinction between homosexual and heterosexual orientations is an alien concept and is foreign to the history of sexual practices of different eras and places. Such categories, he argues, are a nineteenth-century innovation which was used to distinguish perversion from normative behavior and as such are just a means for setting up ground rules for pleasure. For him, private choices for sexual preference are simply an illusion as our choices are conditioned by historical and political factors. Ultimately, he concludes that such innovative structures are mere tools for achieving control and dominance. The reality is that power is everywhere.

¹⁴ Jonathan Ned Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality* (New York: Penguin, 1993); cf. David S. Crawford, “Liberal Androgyny,” 252–254.

¹⁵ Crawford, “Liberal Androgyny,” 252. Katz’s opinion is confirmed by that of John D’Emilio and Estelle Freedman, in *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 4, who also argue that production and reproduction were family-centered. Sexual deviation was punished because it did not contribute to the common good, not because Puritans were sexually repressed culturally.

¹⁶ Katz, *The Invention of Heterosexuality*, 186–187.

¹⁷ Livio Melina and Jean Laffitte, *Amore Coniugale e Vocazione alla Santità* (Turin: Effatà Editrice, 2006), 45.

¹⁸ Christine E. Gudorf, *Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 1994), 81–138, esp. 82–89.

¹⁹ Melina and Laffitte, *Amore Coniugale*, 45–46.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 46–47.

²¹ Gudorf, *Body, Sex, and Pleasure*, 134.

²² Pope Benedict XVI, *Light of the World*, 151–152.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Pope Pius X, Exhortation to Catholic Clergy *Haerent animo* (4 August 1908), ASS 41 (1908): 555–557; Pope Pius XI, Encyclical Letter *Ad catholici sacerdotii* (20 December 1935), AAS 28 (1936): 5–53; Pope Pius XII, Apostolic Exhortation *Menti nostrae* (23 September 1950), AAS 42 (1950): 649–702.

²⁵ Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and University Studies, *Circolare Per i Direttori spirituali dei seminari* (1955), in *La direzione spirituale nei seminari* (Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1956), 247–252.

²⁶ *Code of Canon Law* (1983), http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_INDEX.HTM.

²⁷ Sacred Congregation for Religious, *Instructio de candidates ad statum perfectionis et ad sacros Ordines sedulo diligendis et institutendis. Moderatoribus reservata* (Vatican City: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1961).

²⁸ Ibid., n. 30.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Vatican Council II, Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests *Presbyterorum ordinis* (1965), n. 16, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_presbyterorum-ordinis_en.html.

³¹ Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on Priestly Formation *Optatam totius* (1965), n. 6, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html.

³² Pope Paul VI, encyclical letter *Sacerdotalis caelibatus* (1967), AAS 59 (1967), 657–697. Especially of note are nn. 60–72.

³³ Ibid., n. 62.

³⁴ Ibid., n. 63.

³⁵ Ibid., n. 64.

³⁶ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy* (1974) in *Norms for Priestly Formation*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1994): 153–205. Only the Italian version of this document appears on the website of the Holy See.

³⁷ Ibid., n. 5.

³⁸ Ibid., n. 9.

³⁹ Ibid., n. 21.

⁴⁰ Ibid., n. 47.

⁴¹ José Saraiva Martins, “Carattere collegiale dell’opera educative e compiti dei singoli formatori,” *Seminarium* 25 (1995): 809.

⁴² Giancarlo Ghirlanda, “Persone con tendenze omosessuali e ammissione al seminario e agli ordini sacri. Aspetti canonici,” *La Civiltà Cattolica* I (2007): 436–449; Sacred Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Potissimum institutioni* (1990), AAS 82 (1990): 470–532.

⁴³ Ibid., n. 39.

⁴⁴ Giancarlo Ghirlanda, "Persone con tendenze omosessuali e ammissione al seminario e agli ordini sacri. Aspetti canonici," *Seminarium* 47 (2007): 818–819. Ghirlanda points out that there was a revision in the *Catechism* on this article. The 1992 version of the *Catechism* had utilized the language of *Persona humana*, which spoke of "innate homosexual tendencies," but the 1997 version of the *Catechism* used the language of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's letter *Homosexualitatis problema* (On the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons), n. 3: "deep-seated homosexual tendencies," dated 1 March 1986. It is this language that is utilized in *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*. The letter *Homosexualitatis problema* (n. 3) says: "The particular inclination of the person, while not sinful in itself, constitutes, nevertheless, a tendency, more or less strong, toward an intrinsically evil behavior from the moral point of view. For this reason, the inclination itself must be considered as objectively disordered."

⁴⁵ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Letter *Homosexualitatis problema* (1 March 1986), 7.

⁴⁶ *Notitiae* 38 (2002): 586.

⁴⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, *Light of the World*, 152–153.

⁴⁸ Stephen J. Rossetti, "Clinical Reflections on Affective and Sexual Maturity and the Instruction on the Admission of Persons with Homosexual Tendencies to Holy Orders," *Seminarium* 47 (2007): 776.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 779.

⁵⁰ Bartholomew Kiely, "Homosexuality: Science, Morality, and Discipline," *Seminarium* 47 (2007): 696–699.

⁵¹ Giuseppe Versaldi, "L'insegnamento dell'istruzione in relazione al charisma del celibato ai candidate al sacerdozio," *Seminarium* 47, no. 3 (2007): 790–791, my translation.

⁵² John D'Arcy, "Vatican Document on Discernment of Vocations With Regard to Persons With Homosexual Tendencies" (2008), *Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend*, <http://www.diocesefwsb.org/2008/11/vatican-document-on-discernment-of-vocations-with-regard-to-persons-with-homosexual-tendencies-november-29-2005-%e2%80%98instruction-concerning-the-criteria-for-the-discernment-of-vocations-with-re/>.

⁵³ Robert J. Johansen, "Homosexuality and the Seminaries," *Crisis* (February–March 2006), 40 (referencing Fr. Benedict Groeschel as believing "that the instruction was prompted in part by the rise of the gay movement and its destructive impact on the priesthood and seminary life").

⁵⁴ Tony Anatrella, "Riflessioni sul Documento," *L'Osservatore Romano* (Italian), November 30, 2005, 5.

⁵⁵ Pope John Paul II, apostolic exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis* (1992), AAS 84: 657–864, n. 22.

⁵⁶ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, n. 1.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Pope John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, n. 23.

⁵⁹ Versaldi, “L’insegnamento dell’istruzione,” 793.

⁶⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, n. 43.

⁶¹ Pope John Paul II, encyclical letter *Redemptoris hominis* (1979), n. 10, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis_en.html.

⁶² Pope John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, n. 44.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Versaldi, “L’insegnamento dell’istruzione,” 800.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 801.

⁶⁶ Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, n. 2.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Giancarlo Ghirlanda, “Persone con tendenze omosessuali e ammissione al seminario e agli ordini sacri. Aspetti canonici,” *Seminarium* 47 (2007): 820; cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Inter Insignores* (1976), n. 5.

⁶⁹ Ghirlanda, “Persone con tendenze omosessuali,” 822.

⁷⁰ Versaldi, “L’insegnamento dell’istruzione,” 811.

⁷¹ Pope John Paul II, *Pastores dabo vobis*, n. 44.

⁷² Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations*, n. 3.

⁷³ *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1052§3.

⁷⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, *Light of the World*, 153.

Addendum

Current Medical Research (CMR), a summary of research focused on issues relevant to natural family planning, human fertility, the menstrual cycle, and the beginning of life, is a publication of the Natural Family Planning Program of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The managing editor is Theresa Notare, PhD, assistant director. CMR has been written by Richard J. Fehring, Ph.D., R.N., and published in *The Linacre Quarterly*, since August 2009.

Due to an oversight, proper acknowledgement was not given to Dr. Notare or the USCCB NFP Program until the May 2011 issue of *The Linacre Quarterly*. All prior publications should have carried this acknowledgement: “Reprinted from *Current Medical Research*, NFPP/U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. Used with permission.” The editor and contributing editor humbly apologize for this omission.

William V. Williams, M.D.
Editor in Chief
The Linacre Quarterly